Preparatory Committee for the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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Steps to promote the achievement of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East and the realization of the goals and objectives of the 1995 resolution on the Middle East

Report submitted by Canada

1. At the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, Canada supported a resolution calling for the establishment of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East (resolution 62/18). In addition, Canada co-sponsored the resolution entitled "Renewed determination towards the total elimination of nuclear weapons" (resolution 62/37) and voted in favour of the resolution entitled "Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world" (resolution 62/25). Canada has called for the universal and full adherence to and compliance with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) by States in the region. At the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Canada actively supported the adoption of a resolution on the application of safeguards in the Middle East by the IAEA General Conferences in 2005 and 2006. Canada regrets that it was unable to support such a resolution in 2007 owing to the fact that changes presented by the drafters were not the result of a consensual approach. Canada also urged the three States[1] in the region that have not signed or ratified comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA to do so as soon as possible. Canada has appealed to all States in the region to contribute further to regional stability and security by concluding additional protocols to their respective safeguards agreements, thereby demonstrating greater openness and transparency. With regard to the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT), Canada co-sponsored the CTBT resolution (resolution 62/59) at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly, and has also encouraged the three Annex 2 signatories in the region (Egypt, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Israel) to ratify the CTBT in a coordinated manner as a confidence- and security-building measure. Such a measure was included in the Joint Ministerial Statement at the September 2006 Friends of the CTBT ministerial event that was held in the margins of the high-level meetings of the General Assembly and in the Final Declaration of the Conference on Facilitating the Entry into Force of the CTBT that was held in Vienna in September 2007.

[1] Bahrain, Qatar and Saudi Arabia (signed on 16 June 2005 but not in force).

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2. Canada shares the serious international concerns about the scope and nature of the past and ongoing nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Although Canada recognizes that the country has a right to the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, that right also comes with responsibilities. We note that the Islamic Republic of Iran has lost the confidence of the IAEA Board of Governors and the Security Council through its two-decade history of concealing nuclear activities. In the light of this history, as well as the country's failure to provide any plausible justification for its efforts to acquire the full nuclear fuel cycle, Canada fully supports Security Council resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007) and 1803 (2008). Those resolutions clearly state the international community's desire for a negotiated diplomatic solution which respects the right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to peaceful uses of nuclear energy while ensuring the exclusively peaceful nature of its nuclear programme. Canada encourages the Islamic Republic of Iran to pursue the proposed package of incentives offered by China, France, Germany, the Russia Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America to suspend further discussion of its nuclear programme by the Security Council in exchange for a suspension of sensitive nuclear activities by the Islamic Republic of Iran and implementation of the Additional Protocol. In a statement delivered following the adoption of Security Council resolution 1803 (2008), Canada's Foreign Minister, Maxime Bernier, urged the Islamic Republic of Iran to comply with the international obligations set out by the Security Council, including suspension of uranium enrichment. He reminded the Islamic Republic of Iran that doing so is key to the Security Council suspending measures against it and opening the way for negotiations on a mutually acceptable political settlement. He also noted that it is vital that the Islamic Republic of Iran extend its full cooperation to IAEA to clarify remaining questions on reports that it is pursuing studies relevant to weaponization of nuclear materials. It is only through such cooperation and renewed implementation of its Additional Protocol that the Islamic Republic of Iran can begin to restore international confidence in the peaceful nature of its nuclear programme.

3. Canada has called on all remaining States not parties to the NPT to join as non-nuclear-weapon States. As a confidence-building measure in advance of this ultimate goal, Canada has also called on those same States to separate civilian and military fuel cycles and to place all civilian nuclear activities under IAEA safeguards. Those statements are in conformity with both the policies and actions of the Government of Canada, which include Canada's voting record on the resolutions referenced above in paragraph 1 at the sixty-second session of the General Assembly. It also conforms with Security Council resolution 1540 (2004) on the non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, in which the Council calls on all States to promote the universal adoption and full implementation of multilateral treaties whose aim is to prevent the proliferation of nuclear, biological and chemical weapons.

4. Canada recognizes the growing interest in nuclear energy among States parties in the Middle East and welcomes the announcements made by a number of such States over the past year concerning new initiatives in this field. In welcoming those initiatives, we note that all nuclear power programmes should be accompanied by the strongest commitments to nuclear non-proliferation, nuclear safety and nuclear security.